

Trade in America
35,

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

C O N D U C T

OF

S—r W———M H——E.

[Price One Shilling.]

1779

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE



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THE OBSERVATIONS

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UPON THE

C O N D U C T

OF

S—r W——M H——E *K*

AT THE

W H I T E P L A I N S;

AS RELATED IN THE GAZETTE
OF DECEMBER 30, 1776.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. BEW, PATER-NOSTER ROW.

M.DCC.LXXIX.

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

CONDUCT

OF

S—W—M—H—E

AT THE

WHITE PAPER

AS RELATED IN THE GAZETTE
OF DECEMBER 30, 1776.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. BEW, WATER-ROSEY ROW.

MDCCLXXVI.

THE LONDON GAZETTE
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY
OBSERVATIONS, &c.

SIR W—m H—e having called for papers for the satisfaction of the public, and thereby invited us to read and attend to them, I have been accidentally led to the perusal of one of them, and here offer what has occurred upon the occasion.

The observations are confined solely to the General's and Admiral's own account. And, that the reader's mind may not be prejudiced, he is desired first to peruse the letters themselves; with Faden's, or any other larger map of New York and Long Island.

The latter part of the letters, upon the taking Fort Washington, is omitted, as having no relation to the subject.

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THE LONDON GAZETTE .

EXTRAORDINARY ;

Published by Authority.

Monday, December 30, 1776.

“ Whitehall, December 30, 1776.

“ THIS morning Captain Gardner, one of General Sir William Howe’s aid du camps, arrived in his Majesty’s ship Tamar from New York, with the following dispatches from General Sir William Howe to Lord George Germain.

“ New York, November 30, 1776.

“ MY LORD,

“ THE service in which I have been employed since the departure of Captain Balfour, with advice of the reduction of New York, would not allow of an earlier time to send an account to your Lordship of the progress made from that period.

“ The very strong positions the enemy had taken on this island, and fortified with incredible labour, determined me to get upon their principal communication

cation with Connecticut, with a view of forcing them to quit the strong holds in the neighbourhood of King's Bridge, and, if possible, to bring them to action.

“ All previous arrangements being made, the army embarked on the 12th of October in flat boats and other craft, and pressing through the dangerous navigation of Hell Gate, in a very thick fog, landed on Frogs Neck, near the town of West Chester, about nine in the morning, the Carrysfort frigate being placed to cover the descent. The presence of Lord Howe, the activity of Commodore Hotham, most of the Captains of the fleet, and of the navy officers in general, were infinitely conducive to the King's service, in this difficult movement; only one artillery boat was overset, having three six-pounders on board, which were lost, and three men drowned.

“ Lieutenant-General Earl Percy remained with two brigades of British and

one of the Hessians in the lines near Harlem, to cover New York.

“ The army remained in this situation until the stores and provisions could be brought up, and three battalions of Hessians drawn from Staten Island, which, together with some bad weather intervening, occasioned a delay of five days.

“ On the 18th, several corps re-embarked in flat boats, and passing round Frogs Neck, landed on Pells Point at the mouth of Hutchinson's River; after which the main body crossed the mouth of that river to the same place, advanced immediately, and laid that night upon their arms, with the left upon a creek opposite to East Chester, and the right near to Rochelle.

“ On the march to this ground, a skirmish ensued with a small party of the enemy posted to defend a narrow causeway, who were pursued for a mile, when a considerable body appearing in front behind stone walls and in woods,
some

some companies of light infantry, and a part of the chasseurs, were detached to dislodge them, which they did effectually; Lieutenant Colonel Musgrave commanding the first battalion of light infantry, and Captain Evelyn of the fourth regiment, were both wounded; the latter is since dead, and much to be regretted as a gallant officer, but Lieutenant Colonel Musgrave is in a fair way of recovery; three soldiers were killed and twenty wounded.

“ The enemy's loss upon this occasion was a Lieutenant Colonel killed, a Major wounded, and about ninety men killed and wounded.

“ The part of the sixteenth light dragoons that arrived with Lieutenant Colonel Harcourt on the 3d instant (one transport being still missing) and the whole of the seventeenth light dragoons, joined the army on the 20th.

“ On the 21st the right and center of the army moved to a position about two miles to the northward of Rochelle, on the road to the White Plains, leaving

Lieutenant General Heister, with two brigades of Hessians and one of British, to occupy the former ground. Lieutenant Colonel Rogers, with his corps of Rangers, was detached to take possession of Mamaroneck, where the carelessness of his centries exposed him to a surprise from a large body of the enemy, by which he lost a few men killed or taken ; nevertheless, by a spirited exertion, he obliged them to retreat, leaving behind them some prisoners, and several killed and wounded.

“ The sixth brigade, commanded by Brigadier Agnew, was moved the 22d to sustain the post of Mamaroneck. On the same day Lieutenant General Knyphausen, with the second division of Hessians and regiment of Waldeckers, having arrived the 18th at New York, landed at Rochelle, was ordered to remain there to cover the disembarkation of the stores and provisions.

“ Upon the movement of the army to Frogs Neck, the enemy detached a corps to White Plains, and quitted their position

sition about King's Bridge with some precipitation, leaving two thousand men for the defence of Fort Washington, extending their force behind the Brunx, from Valentine's Hill to White Plains, in detached camps, every where entrenched. Their left by this means covering an upper communication with Connecticut, as well as the road along the North River, it was judged expedient to move to White Plains, and endeavour to bring them to an action.

“ Lieutenant General Heister, with his corps, having orders to join on the march, the army moved in two columns on the 25th, and took a position with the Brunx in front, the right of the line being at the distance of four miles from the White Plains; upon which the rebels immediately quitted their detached camps between King's Bridge and White Plains, assembling their whole force at the latter place, behind entrenchments that had been thrown up by the advanced corps.

“ The army marched by the right in two columns towards White Plains early on the 28th, Lieutenant-General Clinton leading the right, and Lieutenant-General Heister the left column.

“ Before noon all the enemy's advanced parties were drove back to their works by the light infantry and chaffeurs, and the army formed with the right upon the road from Mamaroneck to the White Plains, about a mile from the centre of their lines; and the left to the Brunx, near the same distance from the right flank of their entrenchments.

“ A corps of the enemy was formed on a commanding ground, separated from the right flank of their entrenchments by the Brunx, which also, by changing its course nearly at right angles, separated this corps in front from the left of the King's army.

“ Colonel Raille, who commanded a brigade of Hessians on the left, observing this position of the enemy, and seeing a height on the other side of the
Brunx

Brunx unoccupied by them, from whence their flank might be galled, took possession of it with great alacrity, to the approbation of Lieutenant-General Heister, who was acquainted with this movement by Sir William Erskine.

“ Upon viewing the situation, orders were given for a battalion of Hessians to pass the Brunx and attack this detached corps, supported by the second brigade of British, under the command of Brigadier-General Leslie, and the Hessian grenadiers sent from the right, commanded by Colonel Donop; giving directions at the same time for Colonel Raille to charge the enemy's flank as the Hessian battalion advanced to them in front; but there being some difficulty in passing the Brunx, the 28th and 35th regiments, who were the first to support, passed it in a place most practicable, and formed on the opposite side, though under the enemy's fire, with the greatest steadiness; ascended the steep hill in defiance to all opposition, and rushing on
 2 the

the enemy, routed, and drove them back from their works.

“ These two battalions were closely supported by the 5th and 49th regiments, who shewed the same zeal to distinguish themselves; the Hessian grenadiers also coming up, and passing the Brunx, ascended the height with the greatest alacrity and in the best order.

“ This material post being gained, the Hessian grenadiers were ordered forward upon the heights within cannon shot of the entrenchments, the Brunx from its winding course being still between them and the enemy's right flank; the 2d brigade of British formed in the rear of the Hessian grenadiers, and the two brigades of Hessians on the left of the 2d brigade, with their left upon the road leading from Terry town to White Plains.

“ The right and centre of the army did not remove from their ground. In this position the troops lay upon their arms

arms that night, and with very little alteration encamped next day.

“ The officers and men of the British and Hessian artillery deserve much commendation for their active services on this occasion.

“ The killed, wounded, and prisoners taken from the enemy, during the course of this day, is said to be not less than 250.

“ The loss of his Majesty's troops and allies was small, as your Lordship will observe by the general return, considering the strength of the ground from whence the enemy was forced; though the loss of Lieutenant-Colonel Carr of the 35th regiment, who died the next day of his wounds, is much to be lamented.

“ The enemy drew back their encampment on the night of the 28th; and, observing their lines next morning much strengthened by additional works, the designed attack upon them was deferred; and the 4th brigade, left with
Lord

Lord Percy, with two battalions of the 6th brigade, were ordered to join the army.

“These battalions having joined on the 30th in the afternoon, a disposition was made for the attack next day; but the night and morning proving very wet, it was postponed: in the mean time the rebels, having intelligence by a deserter of their danger, most prudently evacuated their camp in the night of the 1st of November, after setting fire to all the houses in and near their lines, most of which were consumed, and retired with their main force towards North Castle, leaving a strong rear guard upon the heights and in the woods, for one mile back from their entrenchments, the possession of which was immediately taken, and the Hessian grenadiers remained upon the ground.

“All these motions plainly indicating the enemy's design to avoid coming to action, I did not think the driving their rear

rear guard further back an object of the least consequence.

“ Lieutenant General Knyphausen being ordered, on the 28th of October, to leave the regiment of Waldeck at Rochelle, and to move with the six battalions of Hessians of his corps towards Kingsbridge, took post at Miles Square and Valentine’s Hill, and on the 2d of November encamped on the island of New York near to King’s Bridge; the enemy quitting the heights of Fordham upon his approach, retired to Fort Washington.

“ The army was ordered, on the 3d, to provide three day’s forage; and the next day Major General Grant marched with the fourth brigade to Miles Square and Valentine’s Hill; the sixth brigade to a bridge over the Bronx in West Chester near De Lancey’s mills; and the Waldeck regiment took post at another, three miles above the former, on the same river.

“ On

“ On the 6th the army encamped at Dobbs's Ferry upon the North river.

“ When this movement was made, the rebels came down from their strong holds, burning what they had not before destroyed at White Plains, and distressing the inhabitants by small parties, in a most wanton degree.

“ *Admiralty Office, December 30, 1776.*

“ CAPTAIN Mason, of his Majesty's sloop the Tamar, arrived yesterday at Dartmouth, and came to Town this morning with dispatches from Lord Viscount Howe, of which the following is a copy :

“ *Eagle, off New York, November 23, 1776.*

“ S I R,

“ The General thinking fit to move with a large part of the army to the right of the rebel forces, who were preparing to establish themselves for the winter

winter on the heights above King's Bridge, as well as on the north part of York Island, the embarkation of the troops in the flat boats and small vessels provided, was made from Kip's Bay, in the night of the 11th of last month, under the direction of Commodore Hotham, with the Captains of the ships from which the boats were manned, as in the former instances; and the troops were landed in the morning on the peninsula of Frogs Neck, in the Sound, about ten miles eastward from New York, without opposition.

A thick fog prevailing when the boats entered the dangerous passage through Hell Gate, every ill consequence was to be apprehended; but it fortunately happened, that no other injury was sustained, besides the oversetting of an artillery boat, by which accident two field pieces and three men were lost.

It had been some time before resolved, in order to prevent the enemy from receiving supplies by the North
 I River,

River, to send a detachment of ships above their works at Jefferys Hook on York Island and the opposite shore of Jersey, between which they had been lately making fresh attempts to block the Channel. Captain Parker in the Phoenix was again chosen for this service, with the Roebuck and Tartar. The wind did not permit the ships to pass the enemy's works until the 9th. By the accounts I have a few days since received from Captain Parker, I find the ships had suffered much in their masts and rigging; the loss of men, as in the inclosed return, was less considerable. Of four of the enemy's gallies chased from their stations behind the lines of sunken frames and vessels placed to obstruct the passage of the river, two were taken; one mounting a thirty-two pounder with swivels, the other two nine pounders and two four pounders. The two remaining gallies, with some small vessels, being favoured by the tide and weather, escaped the ships in shoal water, where they

they had sufficient protection from the shore, which was in the enemy's possession.

“ The General judging it necessary to make a second movement with the troops he conducted, further to the eastward of Frogs Neck, the light infantry, grenadiers, and other corps of the first embarkation, were again taken into the flat-bottomed boats, and landed the 18th on Pells Neck, separated from Frogs Neck by Hutchinson's River. The rest of the army, which had only that narrow stream to pass, were conveyed over with the artillery and baggage a few hours after. And the second division of the Hessians, that came under convoy of the Diamond the 19th, were carried up in the flat boats, and landed the 23d on Myers Neck, the post of communication with the fleet last established, nearer to New Rochelle.

“ This position of the army requiring further provision to be made for keeping the intercourse open by water

C with

with York Island, the Rose and Senegal were added to the frigates and small armed vessels before stationed in the Sound for that purpose.

“ It is incumbent on me to represent to your Lordships on this occasion, and I cannot too pointedly express, the unabating perseverance and alacrity with which the several classes of officers and seamen of the ships of war and transports have supported a long attendance and unusual degree of fatigue consequent of these different movements of the army. Captain Phipps, and the detachment of seamen under his command, who were further appointed to assist in the service of the artillery upon an emergency, have acquired much credit by their spirited conduct on that duty.

“ The enemy, retreating on every occasion as the army advanced, were forced from the White Plains, (where they seemed prepared to make some stand) into the North Castle district, and have finally

finally retired, with the greatest part of their forces, behind the Cooton River, whereby the communication was open from York Island with the continent, by King's Bridge."

THERE is a story currently told, that when General Heister was upbraided with the loss of the Hessian brigade at Trenton, and asked how he came to trust it to such a drunken fellow as Raille, the reply made was; Sir, if you will tell me why you would not make an end of the war at White Plains, I will then give you an answer.

Heister is dead; and I do not warrant the truth of this story: but the hearing of it led me to read over the General's account of this affair.

It sets out with telling us, "The very
" strong positions the enemy had taken
" on this island, (of New York) and
" fortified with incredible labour, deter-
" mined me to get upon their princi-
" pal communication with Connecticut,

“ with a view of forcing them to quit
 “ the strong holds in the neighbour-
 “ hood of King’s Bridge, and, if possible,
 “ to bring them to action.”

The map, or any inhabitant of New York, will inform the reader, that the principal road of communication between King’s Bridge and Connecticut is through New Rochelle. That the whole tract of land south and south-west of Rochelle, forms a peninsula, shut up on three sides by the North River, and an arm of the sea called the East River. That there were only two roads by which the rebels at King’s Bridge could escape out of this peninsula ; the one due north towards Canada, and the other north-east through Rochelle towards Connecticut. That White Plains lies out of this peninsula, a few miles to the northward : and that Frogs Neck is a point of land at the bottom of this peninsula, forming the south-east corner of it.

And every one must understand by
 these

these expressions, that the General meant to avail himself of the benefit of the fleet, and land at the back of the rebels upon the Connecticut road, and attack them as soon as he could. This was certainly a very wise and just measure, and so obvious an one, that many people wondered he did not pursue it above a month before, when the army lay encamped at New Town in Long Island. He might from thence have avoided the dangerous navigation of Hell Gate ; and by landing at Rochelle, and taking post between that and the North River, have shut up the whole rebel army.

Sooner or later, it was certainly a very just and wise measure, had it been put in any sort of execution.

To a common understanding, two things seemed necessary for this purpose. The first was the landing upon, or as near as possible to, the road of communication : and the other was the marching directly up to it, and cutting off the enemy's retreat ; or, if they *did*

move, attacking them immediately, before they had time to entrench.

The General thought differently upon each of these heads. Instead of landing at Rochelle (or close by it, at Myers Neck, where the second division of Hessians afterwards *did* land; and where the army would have been *upon* the principal road of communication; and in three hours march might have possessed themselves of the posts upon Brunx and White Plains, before the enemy could have got thither) he chose for his landing-place, a point that runs farthest south-east into the sea; and is the single spot upon the whole coast, which was the most remote from the road of communication he was to cut off.

Even from this remotest place, the army had but ten or twelve miles march, either to the enemy at King's Bridge, or to the principal communication at Rochelle. And we might have hoped that he would have immediately proceeded to action. We had the more reason to expect

expect that nothing could have detained him, because he tells us, that he *had made all previous arrangements before he set out*. And yet no sooner is he landed, than he judges it necessary to stand still five days, waiting, he says, for stores and provisions.—With his brother attending him, and a fleet of transports able to carry provisions for ten months, and all his previous arrangements, he is afraid of his army's starving in five days.

If there *was* any intention to intercept the enemy, and bring him to action, the General himself will explain, how this motion tended to further it; otherwise the reader's own plain sense might lead him to think, that it was the only visible way to frustrate it.

Had the General, after having sent a part of the fleet up the North River, landed his army at Rochelle, and possessed himself of the two roads between the North and East rivers, he would have shut up the rebel army in the peninsula of New York, and obliged them either

to lay down their arms, or to fight him upon what disadvantageous terms he pleased.—But this would have been the stroke of a master, and might have put an end to the rebellion.

Instead of landing to the northward of them, and shutting them up, he chose to land at the farthest point of ground to the southward, and let them out; and, though it does not appear how this motion could be of service to the royal army, it manifestly answered two very material purposes to the rebels. It gave them notice of the General's design, and five days leisure to provide against it.—Accordingly they took the warning; and, as the letter tells us, formed a chain of entrenched camps behind the Bronx; *and sent forward a detached corps, to mark out and entrench a strong camp on White Plains, as a secure place for them to retreat to.*

But when a delay of five such important days is ascribed to the waiting for provisions, it is impossible not to ask ourselves,

ourselves, on what it was that the troops subsisted, till this their grand stock arrived? Doubtless on the provisions they brought with them. And would not they have fed them upon a march of ten miles to Rochelle, and eight more to the Brunx and White Plains, as well as during near a week's * residence in this new-acquired peninsula? The Duke of Marlborough, after he had got over the East River, would have marched to the place of destination, or have attacked his enemy, in six hours; while our modern General keeps his army in inaction six days, waiting for provisions; which surely could have been brought for him to Myers Neck or Rochelle, just as easily as to Frogs Neck. See the very different conduct adopted upon a similar occasion. In the year 1708, when the Duke of Marlborough judged it necessary to dislodge the enemy from the banks of the

* The troops embarked on Friday night, landed at Frogs Neck at nine on Saturday morning, and left it the next Friday noon.

Scheld, and *really* intended to bring them to action; he marched an army of one hundred and eighty squadrons, and one hundred and twelve battalions fifteen miles, two nights successively: crossed the Dender, threw bridges over the Scheld, and came up with the French on the other side of it by four o'clock in the afternoon: when, without trusting to the delay of a single night, he immediately brought them to action, and that very evening won the battle of Oudenard.

The progress of modern warriors is more deliberate: when General Howe, *being determined to force the enemy from their strong holds, and, if possible, bring them to action*, had crossed the East River, and landed at Frog's Neck, with an army not above a third part of the Duke of Marlborough's, he spent nine days in going the first ten miles to new Rochelle, and seven more in going the other eight to White Plains. In the first nine days, after some skirmishings, and various
 haltings,

haltings, till the enemy should at their own leisure move off from King's Bridge, and their other entrenchments between that and White Plains, and thereby secure themselves from being shut up; the army incamped near Rochelle on the 21st, and from thence marched the remaining eight miles by the 28th, when the General, not chusing to attack the Rebel camp on that day, made a disposition to do it three days after, on the 31st. But it proving a wet night and morning, the attack, he says, *was postponed*.

What were the disadvantages attending rain is not mentioned, but there were some manifest advantages; the Royal troops were furnished with bayonets; the Rebel riflemen could not have them; and many of the others, it is said, were without them. In the attack of entrenchments, the less the assailants depend upon their fire, and the quicker they march up, the better. Yet we have twice seen the Americans suffered to go off unattacked upon account of rains; which

which must always damp the fire of the defenders: and the last of which, by wetting their cartridges, rendered them incapable of making any fire at all. Considering how the rebels had abandoned all their former camps, at Long Island, at New York, at King's Bridge, and at what are here called their other strong holds; and how very much their number had been reduced*; it might have been expected, that upon seeing the disposition made to attack them on the 28th, they would have evacuated their camp the next night: but knowing that in all former instances they had been permitted to go off with impunity, they presumed on the General's long-sufferance till the night of the 1st of November, and then

* They who seemed the best informed, said, that Mr. Washington had not then left with him more than ten thousand men; and, considering that he had lost three thousand at Long Island, three hundred at New York, and had left two thousand seven hundred at Fort Washington; and considering the number of deserters that leave a flying army, they could not probably exceed half the number of the Royal.

at last recollected themselves, and abandoned their entrenchments. The letter adds, with the usual triumph ; *we immediately took possession of them, and the Hessian grenadiers remained upon the ground.*

The Duke of Marlborough's method of bringing his enemies to action, was to prevent them by the quickness of his motions, and to come upon them sooner than they expected. " The French
 " Generals," say the annals of the time,
 " did not imagine, that a great army
 " could march five leagues through an
 " inclosed country, level the roads,
 " throw bridges over a great river, and
 " attack them, all in one day." A modern General, instead of preventing an enemy by the quickness of his motions, rather warns him by the slowness of them. All former warriors, when they professed a determination to bring their enemies to action, were understood to intend as soon as possible to march up and fight them, before they had time to move off: but the bringing an enemy to
 action

action now means, the deliberately moving up to them, and then standing still for as many days as they think fit, till they shall be disposed to move off *without* fighting.

The reader will find every thing, which is here said, in the letter itself: and when that is printed in the Gazette, for the public information, every man has an undoubted right to express his sentiments upon it.

The camp near Rochelle was within eight miles of the enemy's camp, on the 21st of October; and the rebels moved off, *unattacked*, the night of the 1st of November.

What greatly adds to the national humiliation is, that the General, after telling us twice over, in this letter, that he was determined to bring the enemy, if possible, to action; and after having for nine days together lain near enough to do this, tells us at length, that the 31st of October proving a wet morning, he deferred it again. And after that, *the rebels*

rebels having intelligence by a deserter of their danger, most prudently evacuated their camp in the night of the 1st of November.

What was the intelligence which this deserter gave, the General could know no more than we. Washington surely did not send it him; and the deserter did not come back to tell it him: it could therefore only be a subject of conjecture; but upon comparing the state of the two armies, he seems so fully apprised of the superiority of his own, and of the danger to which the enemy was exposed, while they continued where they were, as to take it for granted, that this deserter informed them of this danger; and that thereupon the next night they most prudently moved off.—Nay more; the General seems not only himself sensible of this superiority, and of the danger the rebels were in; but he must have believed, too, that every man in his army saw this as well as himself: else he could have no reason to suppose, that this deserter told them of it.

it. If therefore it was dangerous for the enemy to stay, and so very prudent for them to move off, what then are we to think of a commander's prudence, who for nine days together remained inactive, and did not make use of the advantage which he saw and owns he had over them?

“ On the 28th,” he tells us, “ all the
 “ enemy's advanced parties were driven
 “ back to their works, and the army
 “ formed within a mile of their center :
 “ That Colonel Raille, with a brigade
 “ of Hessians, had seized a height on
 “ the other side the Brunx, from whence
 “ their left flank might be galled : That
 “ the 5th and 49th regiments, followed
 “ by the Hessian grenadiers, after cross-
 “ ing the Brunx, under the fire of the
 “ enemy, had attacked and beaten the
 “ rebels from another height : That this
 “ material post being gained, the Hef-
 “ sian grenadiers were ordered forward
 “ upon the heights, within cannon-shot
 “ of the entrenchments.”

After

After braving the enemy's fire, and gaining these material posts; so very advantageous for attacking them in flank, and turning their line; we might have thought it impossible for the General *not* to bring them to action: but instead of immediately attacking them, he contents himself with standing still, as if waiting for them to attack him. After a part of the army had forced the passage of the river, and had gained the heights on the enemy's flank, instead of our hearing that the rest of the army was ordered to pass, and immediately make use of these advantages, the letter calmly tells us, that *the right and center of the army did not move from the ground: That in this position the troops lay upon their arms that night, and with very little alteration encamped the next day.* Must there not have been some little alteration in the General's countenance, at least, while he was writing this? Could he think it possible for us not to ask, To what purpose was it that the troops

D

had

had forced the passage of the Brunx, routed a part of the rebel army, and gained these advantageous posts, if the army were to sit still and do nothing when they came there?

The friend of his country, who now sees a French war brought upon us by the not finishing the American, must surely feel a deep concern on so mortifying an occasion.

If on the 30th of October the acknowledged superiority of the royal army was such as to make it dangerous for the rebels to stay; was it not equally dangerous on the 28th? when the royal army, by his own account, was rather stronger than on the 30th, and the rebel camp was confessedly much weaker. Yet on that very 28th, when the terror of seeing their out-posts routed and driven in, and of seeing their flank exposed, was fresh upon the enemy's minds, the General, far from intending to bring them to action, ordered away six of his regiments, as if he

9

thought

thought himself too strong; and then the next morning, observing that the enemy had improved the day's respite he had given them, in strengthening their camp, resolved to give them two days more, while he sent for five regiments from New York; as if he was now too weak: and even after waiting two days for their arrival, made no use of them when they were come; but chose to allow the rebels one or two days more to see their danger and escape from it.

Upon the whole; examples might perhaps be found of a General's suffering an enemy to escape by a delay of a few hours, or a single night; but it will be difficult to point out an instance in history of a commander's owning, that it was *judged expedient to march up to the enemy, and endeavour to bring them to action*, and professing himself *determined to do so*; and then keeping his army in inaction for several days together, within cannon-shot of the enemy, when he

himself tells us, that the state of the two armies was such, as to make it dangerous for the enemy to stay where they were, and much more prudent for them to move off.

POST.

P O S T S C R I P T.

THE Reader may have observed, that these remarks upon the army's proceedings have been confined solely to the account as it stands in the Gazette. According to that account, nothing can be more surprising, than the General's chusing to divide his short voyage of 20 miles into two, and landing half way at Frogs Neck, as if it were merely to tell the enemy whither he was going; and then remaining six days there, as if in order to give them time to fortify the proper posts, and secure their retreat. I have never heard a reason given for his going thither, though some of his favoured officers have attempted at an apology for his stay there. But the General himself probably has been better advised, in ascribing his stay to bad weather, and waiting for provisions; for the reasons which his friends have assigned, tend

only to make the matter worse, and to put him still more in the wrong.

The General, say they, was misinformed—not surely in the position of Frogs Neck. — No one could inform him, that the way to cut off an enemy's communication to the *northward*, and thereby bring him to action, was to land his army at the most extreme point to the *southward* of them. This was a measure which, if it was right, must have been intentionally right; and if it was otherwise, could not be the effect of misinformation.

But the General was misinformed about the nature of the ground at Frogs Neck, and did not know but that he could have marched his army out of it. — The General himself has not hinted any disappointment of that sort; and perhaps he may not thank his friends for bringing, what the world may call a *charge*, rather than an *apology*. Did ever any General chuse for his landing-place a detached part of a coast, without having first fully informed

informed himself whether it was an island or not? Did ever General disembark his army upon a point of land, whose very name spoke it to be a peninsula at least, without knowing whether there was a way out of it or not? Did ever General put his army upon a march, without enquiring whether he had not a morass or river in his way? Yet these are the reasons which have been assigned for his stay there. Reasons which recoil with double force, against his ever having gone thither.

A captain of rangers, making new discoveries in the inland forests of America, might come to a river or swamp which he was not aware of; but the chusing a rout for a royal army, in a well-inhabited country, only ten miles from the capital, without informing himself of what every native of New York could have told him, is a case perfectly new, and not easily to be accounted for.

Had this been a sudden resolution, taken up upon some unexpected emergency, that

that might have been some alleviation to our concern ; but it was a measure which had already been a subject of six weeks deliberation : and had he studied six months longer, (so far as has yet appeared) he could not have found out a spot more improper for his purpose.

The General himself speaks of Frogs Neck as of a place well known, and needing no explanation. The Admiral calls it a peninsula. A former Gazette of the 21st of December describes it as an island. The proprietors of the lands and mills at the outlet, one at least of whom was then with the General at New York, could have told him, that for all the purposes of marching an army, it was really an island ; the only outlet being over an artificial causeway of wooden logs, laid in the marsh, the breadth of a single waggon ; and a bridge over a gut or arm of the sea, made of the same materials. It is hardly necessary to apprize the reader, from the former Gazette, that the rebels had taken
up

up this bridge and causeway ; for there was but one man, I suppose, in New York, who would not have expected it.

After having several of his men shot from the higher grounds, in their march along this neck, the army found a river or creek before them, and an enemy behind a breastwork on the other side of it.

Here the General found himself at a stand ; and just as far from his purpose, as if he had staid at New York : he could not go on ; and this therefore, like his other *forward movements*, ended only in a *backward retirement*. And whereas during the six preceding weeks, the troops at their camp in Long Island might have had the shortest and most commodious passage from Whitstown to Rochelle ; the General now perceived, as the result of his long deliberation, that he had put his own army under all the disadvantages, in which he might have placed his enemy. That instead of his getting upon the enemy's road of communication, they had got upon his.

That instead of his shutting up the whole rebel army, a very small part of theirs had shut up all his. And that he had chosen a position, which, far from enabling him to bring the enemy to action, had tied up his own hands and legs, and rendered him utterly unable to act at all.

What could have induced him to land on such a spot, the General has not thought fit to tell us: but the nation has a right to ask him, why he put the King's army into a pound, of which the King's enemies had the lock and key?

They were attended by the King's ships, and a fleet of flat boats, in a manner that never army was before; and therefore could not be lost. But without that resource, they must probably have been reduced to the necessity of starving, or surrendering to a handful of rebels that locked them in.

The two known requisites to the success of every military enterprize, are secrecy

crecy and expedition. Secrecy the General had given up, by thus stopping half way : but this, and every other consideration, it might have been thought, would have prompted him to expedition. The fleet of boats which had rowed him the first half of his way, lay ready to carry him the other half. The map will shew the reader, that the extent of this his tether (or, if he chuse it, of this his territory) was but three or four miles over. And we might have hoped that every part of it could have been reconnoitred in as many hours ; and that the General, finding that he could not go on, would have wished to get out of this pound as soon as possible. The nation, at least, might not have wished him to give the rebels more time to secure themselves : the General however chose otherwise ; and, far from immediately putting his troops into their boats again, and rowing the next tide to Rochelle, their place of destination, he kept the King's troops for six days in this state
of

of humiliation, as if it were only to
make them the laughing-stock of the
Americans: who, both friends and foes,
all asked, the one with indignation, and
the other with triumph, How they ever
came there!

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